

May weekends full of activities

By Linda Laws
Community relations advisor

May has two long weekends. May 5 is May Day and May 26 is Spring Bank Holiday. May is also the month when many summer events commence – for example, church flower festivals, town festivals and parades. Here are just a few to consider seeing.

Newmarket Guineas Festival

The highlight of the Newmarket Guineas Festival, May 2 - 4, is the festival concert by The Band of the Grenadier Guards at Tattersall's, The Avenue, Newmarket at 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets range from £7.50 - £12.50. Accompanied children are £2.50. For more information, call (01638) 667200.

Budweiser Basketball Championships

The Budweiser Basketball Championships take place at Wembley Arena, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex, May 3 - 4. This event is the climax of the basketball season with four teams in action. It is open from 7 - 11 p.m. May 3 and from noon - 8 p.m. May 4. Tickets range from £9 - £17 for adults and from £6 - £14 for children. For more information, call the ticket office at (0181) 900 1234.

Spalding Flower Festival, Country Fair

May 3 will see the 39th parade of floats through the fen town of Spalding, Lincolnshire. This year's theme for the Spalding Flower Festival, May 3 - 5, is "Children's World." The number of tulips grown in this part of England is not so great as in the past, but the parade is still a spectacular and colourful display of floats decorated with tulip heads.

The parade starts at 2 p.m. at Springfields Gardens, just outside Spalding, and travels in a clockwise direction around the town, arriving back at Springfields at 5

p.m. Thousands of people line the route, so if you want a good view, get there early. If the Saturday crowds don't appeal, you can see the floats in a static display on Sunday and Monday as they form part of the Country Fair.

The fair is open from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. May 3 - 5. Last tickets are sold at 4 p.m. Admission is £5 for adults and accompanied children are free. For further details, call (01775) 724843.

In addition to the fair, 15 churches in the surrounding area have flower festivals over the weekend.

Brighton Festival

Brighton – which lies on the south coast of England, due south of London – is probably most famous for the rather unusual un-English looking pavilion and for being the finishing point for the London-Brighton Veteran Car Run in November. The Brighton Festival, May 5 - 25, offers a selection of street entertainment, dance, theatre, exhibitions and concerts. For further information, contact the Festival Information Point on (01273) 706771.

Warwick Castle

Listen to mediaeval storytellers as they weave their tales of old at the Warwick Castle May Day Festival May 3 - 5. See 13th century knights battle for the defence of the realm.

Let jousting commence as the first of this year's jousting contests unfurl. Warwick's Jousting Weekend is May 24 - 26.

A new attraction for 1997 is the castle's refurbished ghost tower. As visitors wander through its haunted rooms, they hear one of the grisliest tales from the castle's past – the murder of its owner, Sir Fulke Greville, by his manservant 300 years ago.

Admission is £8.95 for adults and £5.40 for children ages 4 - 16. Family tickets – two adults plus two children – are £25.

Heliride at the Commonwealth Experience

New at The Commonwealth Experience in Kensington High Street, London, W8, is Heliride. Opening May 24, Heliride promises to be the flight of your life, so fasten your seat belt for a thrilling helicopter ride over



Photo by Chris Ryder

A knight a Warwick Castle talks about its mediaeval history.

Malaysia. You'll skim the trees of the lush rain forest, race over paddy-fields and swoop between glittering skyscrapers. Other features at the location include: interactive world, Commonwealth exhibitions, art exhibitions and refreshment facilities. Admission is £4.45 adults and £2.95 for children. Family tickets – two adults plus two children – are £11.95. For more information, call (0171) 371 3530.

Richmond Horse Show

Set in the beautiful Old Deer Park in Richmond in London (nearest tube Richmond), the three-day Richmond Horse Show, May 24 - 26, includes showjumping and many classes of competition. There will also be dog displays, falconry, the Metropolitan Mounted Police, heavy horses, craft tents, trade stands and children's events. For more information, call (0181) 894 7075.

Spring Spectacular

Next to the Queen's country residence, The Spring Spectacular at Sandringham, May 25 - 26, will include displays of classic cars, steam engines and modern boats, as well as trade stands, craft fair and demonstrations. This is fun for all the family. The spectacular is open from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day. Admission is £3.50 for adults and £2.00 for children.



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